

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-15 are currently pending, with claims 1 and 12 being written in independent form. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 2 and allowable claim 8. Claim 12 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 16. Consequently, claims 2, 8, and 16 have been cancelled, and claims 3, 4, 9, and 11 have been amended for proper dependency and antecedent basis.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner has deemed claims 3-11 and 15-16 as containing allowable subject matter.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 1-2 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by US 2002/0036161 (Nemoto). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons below.

Amended claims 1 and 12 are allowable at least by virtue of their inclusion of the subject matter of allowable claims 8 and 16, respectively. Consequently, claims 13-14 are also allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 12. The rejection with regard to claim 2 has been rendered moot in view of its cancellation. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the above rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant earnestly solicits reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims. Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____

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